



Passion's  
Dream  
A  
TRAGEDY  
✠

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# PASSION'S DREAM.

*A TRAGEDY.*

BY ✓  
W. BOYD SAMPLE.



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## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

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|            |   |   |   |   |                             |
|------------|---|---|---|---|-----------------------------|
| EDGAR      | . | . | . |   | <i>An English Nobleman.</i> |
| LADY CLARA | . | . | . |   | <i>Wife to Edgar.</i>       |
| CHARLES    | } |   |   |   |                             |
| HARRAS     | } | . | . | . | <i>Sons to Edgar.</i>       |
| ELLEN      | . | . | . | . | <i>A Guest.</i>             |
| BERNARDO   | . | . | . | . | <i>A Robber.</i>            |
| MAURICE    | . | . | . | . | <i>Servant to Charles.</i>  |

ROBBERS.

SCENE : *different parts of Edgar's estate.*

[iii]



ACT I.

SCENE I. *A room in Edgar's house. Enter Edgar and Lady Clara.*

*Edgar.* Our son, it seems, hath his affections  
given

To this young maid. With him I've anxious striven  
In many a sore debate prolong'd,  
And urged that some respect to me belong'd ;  
But he, his mind with fancy sorely fraught,  
Gives little heed, holds my advice as naught,  
And then in secret does not cease to muse

[5]

And think that I his feelings do abuse,  
Which grieves me much. O, could he only know  
The anxious hours that I on him bestow,  
How often by dim candles' light,  
I for his pleasure plan till night takes flight !  
For this dear son, heaven's latest, precious gift,  
My fond desire is to him uplift,  
That when, at length, he fills my vacant chair,  
With honor crown'd, my name through life he'll  
bear.

*Lady Clara.* Dear husband, much I fear you are  
too hard ;

For why should we strive to his love retard ?

Ought we not rather seek his love to prove,  
And that by hidden stead of open move ?

*Edgar.* Ay ! there's the point on which my pride  
doth hang,

And fears such union might a misalliance prove.  
This maid is but of mean and lowly birth,  
And though she be of fair, unblemish'd fame,  
Might bring aspersion on our name.

*Lady Clara.* O, dull, unreasoning reason ! O,  
puff'd

Up man ! Alas ! that now too late I see  
What soft deceit's engender'd by a name.

*Edgar.* Fair wife, you jest. Thou know'st full  
well that I'd

Have wedded thee, hadst thou been as this maid.

*Lady Clara.* O, changing man ! if this be truly so,  
What boots it then this maiden's humble birth,  
Her wealth, her kindred or her nation ?  
All these, but serve for selfish contemplation.

*Edgar.* Lov'd wife, vain now indeed my pride  
appears,  
An empty dread, up-wrought by selfish fears,  
And now, to you this secret I'll impart,  
You've caught me at robbing a youthful heart.

*Lady Clara.* And yet, methinks your fears have  
little ground,  
Since, 't is easy seen, by no ties he's bound ;

And so, dear husband, let us trust the rest  
To patient-working time and love's behest.  
Do you, this day, write to our trusty friend,  
His beauteous daughter us awhile to lend.  
He hath, ere this, made offer of her hand ;  
In faith, what fitter time could we command  
To prosperous lure our son unto this suit ;  
Love disappointed, easy takes new root.

*Edgar.* What mists a little counsel clears,  
Renewing hopes, and quelling fears.  
I will, at once, a fitting escort send  
To crave the honor, and to her attend.

[*Excunt.*

SCENE 2. *The same.**Enter Harras.**Harras.*

O, fairest Dorothy !

O, rare and beauteous flower of chastest dye,  
Whose tender stem swings where I may not pluck !  
Thy coral lips, whose founts I may not know,  
Are like to clear and sparkling springs whereat  
My thirsty soul doth bend yet dares not drink.  
Thy clear blue eyes are as two limpid seas  
Whereon my heart doth steer its ship of love.  
The light that springs from out their shining depths,

A calm and peaceful harbor brings to view,  
 Whose fair, delightful shores I may not reach,  
 Whose sweets I may not taste. O, would that thou  
 Mightst take the helm, and guide my ship to port !  
 O, love, how swiftly sudden is thy birth !  
 What warmth is in thy youth, what peace thy age !  
 So summer's sun ascends his glorious course,  
 And drawing near his zenith, ere more swift  
 His fiery arrows shoots ; then, softening, sinks,  
 His height attain'd, unto a calm repose  
 Upon the loving bosom of the west.

*Enter Charles.*

*Charles.* Come, brother, brush the cobwebs from  
your mind.

Dismiss that absent look, and in its place,  
Put on your wonted smile and easy grace.  
Fling off dark melancholy, and assume  
The bounding humor of the light and gay.  
Let fancy have full swing. She'll carry you  
With swiftest pace, where joyous laughter rings.  
She'll give thy spirit wings to mount to heights  
Ebullient, where, from dull care far away,  
Fair mirth prevails, and pleasure holds full sway.  
Then come, to mirth and pleasure let 's away ;

For on this night you must yourself appear,  
This gloom you must cast off, and in its stead,  
The smile and voice of welcome wear ; for you,  
This night, must add your presence to a fair  
And festal banquet, where we do intend,  
In an unbroken circle, to unite  
In doing honor to a lovely guest.  
And this, our gracious father bade me say.

*Harras.* Fair Charles, you jest. I have no mind  
For airy nothings, empty compliment.  
If through this soft exterior one might look,  
How harsh, discordant might the inner thought

Appear. These honey'd voices bear for me  
Too much the ring of hollow mockery.  
Say to our father that I will attend,  
And though my heart I may not bring, will due  
Respect unto his guest and banquet pay.  
Light hearts, toward revels go with ardent looks  
But weighted souls with lagging steps attend.

*(Exit Harras.*

*Charles.* O, Ho ! I now perceive his humor is full  
deep,  
And like to hold. In faith, I pray that 't will ;  
For thus the pathway of my fond intent

Already 's cleared of that I most did fear.  
Thus, this proud churl who ever seems to snatch  
Away the sweets I fain would taste, and by  
Some trickery contrives to ever claim  
As his, by right, those fond attentions which  
I'd fairly won, for once I'll thwart, and bear  
This blossom from the field, my very own.  
And thus, o'er him, a double victory  
I'll easy gain ; for well I know whom 't is  
This flower is hither brought to grace.  
To me, no stranger is this lovely guest ;  
This queen of beauty I have seen before.

It chanc'd, when I did scour the north in quest  
Of deer, my filly, stumbling, broke her leg,  
And I was forc'd to seek, on foot, the first  
Domain which proffer'd hospitality.  
There, my misfortune was to fortune turn'd,  
And skies that 'foretime lower'd, brighter grew,  
And I, while time recorded one moon's space,  
Did bask within the sunshine of her glance.  
And though she then my suit did cold reject,  
Methinks I now perceive auspicious signs  
Which tell of sweet success, and lure me on  
To thoughts of love, and love of thoughts of Ellen.

Ay ! brother, draw the mantle of thy pride  
 About you, blind thine eyes with soft conceit  
 While soft I steal away thy treasure. *(Exit.*

SCENE 3. *A hall in Edgar's house.*

*Enter Harras.*

*Harras.* Away ! fond thoughts. Give place to  
 pleasure's sway !

Ah me ! how vain are mirth's but passing sweets  
 Which do exist but for a moment, and  
 Then leave a yawning chasm from which

We cry aloud for more, when more, alas !  
She cannot give. Once 'neath her, seeming, soft,  
Yet iron rule, insatiate, we are  
By whirling impulse lured on from gay  
To gayer pleasures which but, mocking, prove  
Mirages fair whose fruits, in easy reach,  
We vainly grasp, to find but emptiness.  
Fair love, go not away ! Thy presence sweet,  
The portals of my heart have lock'd within,  
There thou shalt ever stay. To banish thee ?  
'T were but a fruitless task. O, empty boast—  
To banish thee ! I could not if I would.

Thou know'st, fair love, I would not if I could.  
Then come with me unto this banquet fair,  
And while the dance, in giddy whirl, goes round,  
And music plays, and shouts of mirth resound,  
I'll sit and talk with thee, and thou with me ;  
Thou tell of her who is thy mistress fair,  
And I will tell of one beyond compare.  
And whilst the brimming cup is freely drain'd,  
And joyous laughter rings throughout the hall,  
We'll draw ourselves apart and combat wage,  
Where thou shalt vie with me, and I with thee,  
In doing honor to each mistress rare.

And if I win, thou shalt confession make  
Of that fair name thou on thy banner bear ;  
But if fair fate should give to thee the palm,  
Then I must name to thee my honor'd fair.  
I know, sweet love, that thou wilt victor be ;  
But yet, thou canst not do my fair one wrong,  
For I and thee both to one heart belong.  
Then come, fair love, our pleasure lies one way.

*Enter* Edgar, Lady Clara,  
Charles, Ellen *and* Guests.

*Edgar.* Good friends, your presence here this  
festal night,

Is truly welcome, and we thank you all.

And now, to all, we do propose this toast—

May merry nights, sweet wine's delights and all

That go to make a joyous, mirthful life,

Recur to each and all in countless number.

Good friends, drink each to each, and each to all.

#### SONG.

Then let the music play,  
Cast thoughts of care away,  
And to the measure gay  
Reel off the night till day.

Then let the minstrel sing,  
Let peels of laughter ring,  
Let each and all be gay  
Until we part at day.

Give way to joyous mirth,  
And at each new step's birth  
Let the ball be rolling  
Faster toward the day,

Let merry hearts combine  
In praises of sweet wine,  
Let the bowl be flowing  
Until the break of day.

Let old and young be gay,  
Let pleasure have full sway,  
And till the break of day  
Give way ! good friends, give way !

(*Dancing.*

*Lady Clara.* Dear husband, now indeed my heart  
is light,

Since on this happy night, our son hath cast  
Aside the gloomy mantle that did shroud  
His heart and presence from our love and eyes.

*Edgar.* Lov'd wife, your heart but echoes what  
mine own

Hath voic'd, and yet methinks he doth but come  
As 't were in duty bound, and not in love.  
I miss his smiling face, his gay retort,  
His gentle grace which ever won and held  
The hearts of all who ever knew his face.

*Lady Clara.* O, fear not that this humor hold ;  
for if

I not mistake, the genial kindness of

His heart already hard doth press, and soon  
 Will break from out its frozen bonds and shine  
 With ardor new. 'T was ever thus. When we  
 Restrain the natural impulse of the heart,  
 We silent grow, and know not that our fond  
 Desires are but pent up and gaining strength  
 To break their chains, and rushing forth will claim  
 With doubl'd energy their natural right.

*(Exeunt Edgar and Lady Clara.)*

*Ellen.* Friend Charles, what fancy preys upon  
 the mind  
 Of your fair brother Harras? He doth seem  
 To bear no interest in our revelry ;

But chooseth, rather, drawing thus apart  
 In moody silence. When I pleasant spoke,  
 His short, abrupt reply, me quite offended ; and  
 Once more I fear Dame Rumor hath been wrong ;  
 For, from report, I did anticipate  
 A greeting I'd receive more like your own.  
 A frank and gentle nature, and a heart  
 Both warm and true, a manner courtly and  
 Refin'd ; all these, and more did rumor give.

*Charles.* All these, I know he hath from nature's  
 store ;

But they are exercis'd by mere caprice ;  
 Whilst unto one he proveth most attent,

The next, he turneth from in haughty pride.  
 This strange behavior grieves me much, and oft  
 I've striven to my inmost heart deceive  
 With vain excuses for these shameful whims ;  
 But now my face doth bear the blush of shame.  
 This latest insult doth my wounded pride  
 Upstir, and rouses me to action. This—

*Ellen.* O, no ! friend Charles, my meaning you  
 mistake ;

'T was not of insult that I did complain.  
 He seem'd as in a dream, or not himself,  
 And thus but coldly greeted me, his guest,  
 Which sharp did wound and pique my feminine  
 heart.

O, no ! it was not insult ; and I fear  
 Some heavy burden weighs upon his heart,  
 That him unfits for merry pleasure's round.

*Charles.* Thou mayst be right. Once more then  
 let it pass. (*Exeunt Charles and Ellen.*)

# SONG.

Good-night, to all a fond good-night,  
 Bright dreams bring brighter morrow.

And may we often, often meet  
 In an unbroken band complete,  
 And often o'er the ruby wine  
 At merry festal tables dine.

And often in the whirling dance,  
 Each seeing in his mistress' glance  
 The love that thrills with sweet delight,  
 May we reel off another night.

Good-night, to all a fond good-night,  
 Bright dreams bring brighter morrow.

(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE 4. *A room in Edgar's house.*

*Discovers Harras.*

*Enter Ellen.*

*Ellen.* O, I shall die from hot remorse and  
shame

That I my simple heart did lend a prey  
To such a villain, who with honey'd words  
Convinc'd me that 't was thou whom I should dread,  
And that I shunn'd thee, now thou shunnest me.  
Thus did he steal from thee a fair disguise,  
And basely pictur'd forth in you—himself.  
O, I have done thee wrong, and ere I go  
I beg that thou wilt just forgiveness show !

*Harras.* Chaste heart, no need hast thou to be  
forgiven ;

'T is rather I, who unto thee should sue.

Fair one, let not this lie upon your heart,

And O, forgive my weak and foolish part !

Henceforth I'll strive to make amends,

And here then, dear, straight let your sorrow end.

Leave him unto his meanly selfish pride,

And let me, loving, linger at thy side.

The friendship so abruptly broken,

Let me replace, and by this token, (*Kisses her hand.*

We'll take a surer way, whose course soft lies

O'er velvet pathways like to paradise ;

Beneath whose shady, spreading, friendly bowers  
We'll roam to cull the sweetest flowers—  
The joys that spring from holy friendship pure,  
Those precious sweets whose balm alone endures.

*Ellen.* O, Harras, you have sure a noble mind,  
A loving soul, to sympathy inclin'd.  
He that possesseth but a steadfast mind,  
Is like an altar with rich beryl lin'd,  
Or like pure gold in furnaces refin'd.  
What joyful peace, when sore by trials prest,  
We fly unto a loving, friendly breast  
Where sorrows flee, and we find tranquil rest.

O, may our hearts as now we join our hands,  
Be ever sway'd by friendship's closest bands.

*Harras.* O, Ellen, dear, as now you hold my  
hand,

My soul but lives to list to thy command,  
My ear but hears to warn me of thy need,  
My lips but move to hold the sorrow-freed,  
My eyes but see to linger on thy peace,  
To shelter thee, my arm shall never cease ;  
But O, to hear, to see, is not to feel  
The sacred touch that makes two hearts as one ;  
Let me then seal our everlasting weal  
On thy fair lips, chaste sentinels of thy soul,  
And lips to lips, forever join our souls.

(*Exeunt.*

SCENE 5. *The same.**Enter Harras.**Harras.*

O, fickle man !

It was but yesterday I lov'd ;

To-day—I love another.

My erstwhile love was but a childish dream,

A passing shadow cast by fancy's mean ;

But this is love's pure, everlasting flame

That melts my soul and blends it with her name.

Her soul's sweet image hangs within my heart,

From which fair shrine, my own no more shall  
part.

My fond heart-throbs make now no other claim  
But leave to live and ever breathe her name.  
A glowing chain enwinds and binds me to her.  
O precious bond ! O bond so firm and true !  
O, join our hearts, and them with love imbue  
Till each drink love as flowers drink evening dew !  
O, precious bond ! O bond so firm and true !  
O, blend our hearts in sweetest, perfect tune,  
Till, like the heavenly, swelling choirs above,  
They play one soft, harmonious song of love !  
Ah me ! I fear her heart doth lie without  
My reach. Perchance 't has been already given

Unto the keeping of some worthier hand ;  
'T has ever been the flowers of loveliest bloom  
That earliest have been pluck'd. Ah, me ! how vain  
To dream the fragrance of a heart so pure,  
Could wanton stoop to grace such love as mine.  
He who to lofty heights would dare aspire,  
Must bear within, gifts worthy of the prize,  
Else he should fall down to the lowest mire  
Of black despair, and, falling, never rise.  
So he who halts midway upon the slope,  
And looking upward, quails before the height,  
Ne'er stands upon the summit in his might,

Since he hath lost the goodly weapon hope.  
See, where she comes, like sudden rising morn  
Bright bearing down on slow dispersing night ;  
For round her moves a radiance so bright,  
That 'fore her day doth pale and night grows light!

*Enter Ellen.*

*Ellen.* O, Harras, dear, where hast thou left that  
smile

With which thou'rt wont my sad soul to beguile ?  
O, let it not from you too oft depart,  
That joyous herald of a happy heart,

For oft dismiss'd it may return no more,  
 And leave you lone, disconsolate and sore,  
 O'er numerous sullen fancies brooding,  
 Which through the open door will straight come  
     trooping.

Art come that I, with friendship's soothing art,  
 May chase the sorrow from your wounded heart?  
 How came that anxious cloud upon thy brow?  
 Come, tell it me, else break our friendship's vow.  
 Hath care's cold wind gan o'er thee blow?  
 Perchance 't is on a journey thou dost go?

*Harras.* Ah, yes! 't is for a journey I prepare.  
 It hath two turnings. One is dreary dark,

The other shining light, and wondrous fair.  
For one I long, and yet I may not choose.  
O, sweet, one gives me thee ; one, thee I lose !  
O, lov'd one, must it then be ta'en alone ?  
O, hardest thought, that I from thee must fly !  
Our friendship new, hath scarcely gan its start,  
Ere I from you, and you from me must part.  
Was ever thus a tender friendship form'd,  
Whose very battlements were not soon storm'd  
And carried by that strongest, softest foe  
Whose name is love, whose war is one long glow  
Of passion, and whose fires will ne'er return

But in their hearts will ever, ever burn ?  
Ah, no ! friendship thus form'd is too soon past ;  
For if not crown'd by love, it ne'er can last.  
Ah ! Ellen, from your eyes no light is thrown,  
Save that by which a tender friendship's shown.  
O, that from my heart some little fire  
Might fan to birth in yours, that fond desire !  
Yet my fond heart is loath to thus give up ;  
It is so hard to drain this bitterest bitter cup.  
O, dear love, if from you I must now go,  
That doom, from your sweet lips, I first must know.  
If from those lips, 't is but a gentle blow.  
O, Ellen ! Ellen ! is it, is it so ?

*Ellen.* O loving heart, how can I bid thee go !  
For your love, none may I returning show,  
And yet—I would that from my heart might flow  
A loving stream that only thou mightst know,  
Which, join'd to thine, might ever with it flow,  
O'er which the gentle breeze of love might blow,  
Through whose clear depths our pictur'd souls  
might shine,  
Mine show thee thine, and thine, in turn, show  
mine.

O, dearest friend, I cannot let thee go !  
Thy love, so great, may make mine grow.

*Harras.* O, precious girl, now I will never go ;

I'll stay by thee, and to thee my love show  
Till thou shalt love me by its overflow.

*(Exeunt.)*

SCENE 6. *The same.*

*Enter Harras.*

*Holding Ellen's Portrait.*

*Harras.* My sweetheart now, in calm repose,  
Rests on her pillow, fair as sweetest rose.  
Her sunny, golden hair, in rich profusion,  
Soft o'er her falls in ravishing confusion.

Her true-blue orbs whose hue doth shame the skies,  
Whose light doth outshine far all other eyes,  
Are hid by lids that loving o'er them lie  
In close communion. Sweetest fair disguise !  
Her softly curved, rare and precious lips  
Are gently clos'd by Cupid's finger-tips.  
In balmy fragrance lightly steals her breath  
To lavish softest zephyrs o'er her breast.  
Borne on the swelling ocean of her breast,  
Between two heaving, snowy billows prest,  
Her lily, snow-white hand divinely dips  
To ride serene—the queen of ships.

Thus peaceful resting is she woo'd by night  
Until bright day shall warn him of his flight ;  
Thus all her charms, in slumber's chaste secluse,  
Proclaim, and hold with life a transient truce.  
O, sweetest girl, thus 'fore me like a dream,  
Thy fairest, rarest charms depicted seem !  
The picture melts, and in its place there stands  
Thine own fair form, with outstretch'd beckoning  
    hands.

I rise to clasp thee to my beating heart,  
When from my soul the vision fair departs.  
My heart upleaps—from my soul's window strains  
To catch, perchance, one sweetest glimpse again.

And now I'll lay me down my weary head  
To lose my soul on an enchanted bed,  
And waft it to thee on that lulling stream  
Whose rippling waves through dreamy portals  
gleam. (*Exit.*)

SCENE 7. *The same.*

*Enter Harras and Ellen.*

*Ellen.* Dear Harras, much I love thee as a friend,  
And much it grieves me that it now must end.  
I would that thou mightst find some other love ;  
There many are, with me, rank'd far above.

Full oft a lonely flower doth charm the eye,  
Which plac'd by others, hath but sickly die.  
Thou art but young : go look in other eyes,  
What lacks in mine, thou'lt find in theirs it lies.  
Their love, too, like to flowers' sweet perfume,  
They'll willing give thee to thy heart illume.

*Harras.* O, love, how canst thou of my love speak  
wrong ?

Thou fairest one, thou shalt to me belong !  
These flowers are young, have not to blossom blown;  
But thou art ripe like fields that should be mown.  
These want experience ; thou hast older grown ;  
Their love might waver ; thine is ever shown.

Thou lov'st me. But yestreen thou told'st me so,  
And couldst thou then so sudden colder grow ?  
Ah, no ! This ripening bud is still so young  
That thou dost fear it hath too sudden sprung.  
Its tender shoots do barely show their heads,  
And ere from these the full-blown flower spreads,  
Thou must their life protect with tender care,  
Lest they should die when none their growth pre-  
pare.

O, lock not up the garden of thy heart,  
And bid this tender bud of love depart ;  
But if thy heart can not its petals see,  
Let me it nourish, and thy gardener be !

I'll o'er it watch with anxious, loving eye,  
And from my heart its tender wants supply.  
On love's soft sunshine I'll this floweret rear,  
When it doth droop, I'll water it with tears.  
O, then, sweet love, with me thy garden share,  
That I may, loving, plant my blossom rare.  
O, see ! its life doth tremble in thy hand,  
O, sweet, and canst thou then its death command ?

*Ellen.* O, no ! Where in my heart thou hast it  
laid,

It shall forever bloom and never fade.

Dear love, 't was but my colder reason that  
Against my warming heart did sharp combat,

And in the strife such weighty weapons drew  
From tri'd example, taught by wisdom true,  
That she, o'ercome by fear, did to him yield,  
And left her treasure bleeding on the field.  
Thus argu'd reason " Though his heart 's sincere,  
His love may not endure, 't is that I fear.  
This may but from a fleeting passion spring,  
Which never yet a lasting love did bring.  
Like as the firefly's ever fitful gleam,  
Whose light, though brilliant, sheds but transient  
beam ;  
So passion's glow is but a passing light  
Which lustrous shines, then fades in darkest night.

The course of true-love should be sure and slow ;  
But passion bursts to life with sudden glow.  
Love is the offspring of esteem—respect ;  
These, join'd to others, forming one—complect.  
That thou, fair heart, lov'st him, I'll not deny.  
Does he love thee ? Time only can reply.”  
Then straight my timid heart began to swell  
With strange forebodings and misgivings fell,  
And fond assurance from her hand did fall,  
And with it fell her treasure and her all.  
But now, my heart the palm of victory bears,  
And doubting reason, too, her colors wears ;

And thus my love is doubly fortifi'd  
Since reason doth my heart no longer chide  
But doth unite with hers his stronger voice  
In claiming thee, the lov'd one of my choice.  
And so my hope is stronger than before  
Since reason guards without, and love within  
the door.

O, love, thou art indeed my only home !  
How could my love from thee one moment roam ?  
Like as the bell from out cathedral dome  
Calls men to worship with its every tone,  
So beats my heart within its cloister'd home  
To call my soul to worship at love's throne.

I love thee, dear, and I am all thine own.

Without thy love e'en life itself were flown.

*Harras.* My sweet, art thou in very truth mine  
own ?

O, priceless gem ! how shall thy worth be known ?

O, lov'd one, how shall I my love thee show ?

My words are but as wanton winds that blow.

These idle vauntings—empty—meaningless,

Can not the passion of the heart express.

Is not my heart within thine own conceal'd,

Its every thought to thee alone reveal'd ?

As thou, dear love, upon my breast recline,

By thy love, thou shalt my love sure divine.

How my soul trembles on, and melting drips  
From mine, drawn through by thine—soul-stirring  
lips !

As lovingly your fingers through mine lace,  
Your love holds mine in intricate embrace.  
Thy breast which lightly heaves against mine own,  
Is a loving ocean over which I'm blown,  
Thy heart, the pilot guiding to the shore  
Where we shall rest in love for evermore.

*(Exeunt.*

## ACT II.

SCENE I. *A room in Edgar's house.**Enter Edgar and Lady Clara.*

*Edgar.* I have, this day, receiv'd dispatches of  
Most weighty import, which do bear upon  
The safety of our tenure to th' estates  
That lie upon the north. I must, at once,  
Procure some trusty messenger, our claims  
To represent, and to our honor hold  
Against the court. Myself must linger here

To quell intestine broils which sharp do break  
Our peace with angry menace. All my band  
Of ever wavering retainers that  
Do hover on our southern border, now  
Anew wrought up into dissension by  
Some fancied grievance, do, with dark intent  
Of throwing off their yoke, and seizing my  
Possessions, rush to hurl against my head,  
In reckless, overbearing power, their  
United fury. Them to overcome  
I must retain unto a man, all who  
Can head a cloth-yard shaft, or couch a lance,

And with the axe safe brook the shock of close  
Encounter ; for in numbers lies my strength.  
Our foe, inur'd to predatory modes  
Of servile war, are so accustom'd to  
Their easy victories carry with a high  
And sweeping hand, that open conflict chills  
Their coward hearts to weak submission. This  
Audacious outbreak must be check'd,  
And they, with sharp contempt, be driven back  
Unto their rightful place, and thus be taught  
A lesson hard, which shall instill into  
Their minds a due respect unto their head,

And fast forever bind with heavy bands  
Their faltering allegiance. To this end,  
I quick must summon all my faithful squires  
Who by a long acquaintance with these bands,  
Are well prepar'd to baffle their assault,  
And turn their wily measures back upon  
Their heads. Thus, am I bound to keep the peace  
At home, while the rich revenue from our  
More distant lands doth hang in jeopardy ;  
And so I come this boon to crave ; your leave  
To send unto the court our Charles ; for he  
Is fully vers'd in these affairs, and might

The mission undertake with little chance  
 Of meeting danger, since his portion of  
 Th' estate which looketh toward the coast, through  
       which

The journey lies, still standeth fast in its  
 Adherence to his will. What say you, wife ?

*Lady Clara.* Dear husband, thou dost do me honor  
       in

Allowing me a voice upon such deep  
 And weighty business ; but thou need'st it not ;  
 For those whom I do claim as mine, thou know'st  
 Are thine, to do with as thou wilt. I would  
 They had been more, or that my woman's hands  
 Had at their beck some heavy power to join

With thine, and help to teach obedience to  
Thy hot, rebellious subjects ; but, e'en as  
It is, these two, take thou the one for war,  
The other for the more unwieldy court.  
I could have wish'd thou hadst made other choice ;  
It seems that thou hast hit upon the bold  
To send to scenes of peace, and found the young  
And tender fit for those of strife.

*Edgar.*

Dear wife,

I've chosen for the best ; for Charles will pass  
But through his own domain which, strange as it  
May seem, doth bear for him a strong regard,

While to myself and all our house it hath  
A foreign aspect, and I trust it not,  
And fear that it may yet make head against  
Myself. There roam fierce robber bands, within  
Whose grasp I fear to trust our younger son.  
And yet my fears may be ill-grounded, and  
I will sound Charles upon 't. Perchance he can  
Insure to him an easy passage, and  
'T will be the wiser plan to hit upon  
The younger for the court.

*Lady Clara.*

Dear husband, wilt

Thou do it? Much 't would ease my fears.

*Edgar.*

I will,

Dear wife, this night, and straight will bring you  
word. *(Exeunt.*

SCENE 2. *The same.*

*Enter Charles.*

*Charles.* Once more doth fortune turn her face,  
and bears

A smiling front toward hopes I had well nigh  
Given o'er ; and now with lighter heart I'll press  
My suit, since my great obstacle 's remov'd.  
Of him I now need have no fear. I've plann'd

A means by which his safe return will prove  
A doughty question which I trust will keep  
Him occupied for many a day. O, Ho !  
That was a lucky stroke I made when I  
Did plead too small acquaintance with the forms  
Of our high court, and with the import of  
Those weighty questions which do hinge upon  
These matters of estate, and when unto  
Our sire I did suggest how much he'd gain  
By choosing that his younger son should bear  
The weight of this high mission ; for I said  
That he, by virtue of his noble gifts,

Would these important matters carry to  
A more successful issue. Ah ! 't was there  
I struck into the centre of his pride,  
And moving that, did likewise move his choice.  
My game doth prove full shy, and I must take  
The fullest measure of my time, lest I  
Should be o'er hasty, and my fair one catch  
Alarm ere I have won her favor. Ha !  
What if this youthful knight should not return ?  
He might full easy fall a prey to those  
Fierce, outlaw'd bands that range for booty, and  
Who leave no trace behind, not even blood.

i

Ha ! this doth promise well, and when the news  
Doth spread, I'll lend a sympathizing ear  
To tales of grief. O, well I know the course  
That leadeth most direct to female hearts.  
This then shall be my course. I will, this night,  
Dispatch advices to my trusty squires  
To this effect, and then my path doth plain  
Appear—an open course to victory.  
I soft will break the news, with moistening eyes,  
Then bide my time till sorrow's first, great grief 's  
Assuag'd, and then I'll lend my tears to blot  
It from the page of memory, and while

She, weeping, to me clings, I'll make myself  
Her only stay, and slow I'll teach to her  
A lesson new, till in my arms, at length,  
I 've coax'd to life a new born love which shall  
Outstrip the last, and bring within my view  
Sweet visions of those fair and lovely charms  
Whose sweets I long to taste within her arms.

*Exit.*

SCENE 3. *The same.*

*Enter Harras and Ellen.*

*Harras.* Sweet love, what cloud is 't hangeth o'er  
thy mind,  
That sheds its rain through those sweet eyes of  
thine?

O, tender heart, to me your cares resign ;  
I'll be your sun, and soon all things shall shine.  
Dear heart, I'll dry your tears with kisses sweet,  
Till kiss on kiss we reach love's joy complete.

*Ellen.* Sweet, I but wept for thee. Thy absence  
long,

Did 'fore my mind draw up a picture of  
That longer journey thou 'lt soon undertake,  
And rous'd within my timid heart a fear  
Lest on thy way, thou mightst meet with some dire  
Mishap which, jealous, rose to snatch thee from  
Me, and when fear thus left the door ajar,  
In at the portal stealing, fancies grim

Did battle with my peace, presaging some  
Event which might, perchance, wreck all my hopes,  
And dash my ship of love upon some rock  
Of sharp disaster. O, could such dark cloud  
Ere cast its lowering shadow o'er my life,  
And black obscure its sky, and quench its sun,  
Within its gloom my wounded soul would droop,  
And drooping die ! Such cruel blow would in  
Its fall, forever lame her pinions, and  
Point out a swift descent from brightest realms  
Of bliss, to lowest depths of dark despair.  
But at thy coming, love, my darkened sky

Doth brighter grow, and by thy sunny light,  
 I now perceive, on its horizon fair,  
 Sweet visions of a field of careless joys  
 Which we shall taste together on a fair  
 And happy mount whose slopes we hand in hand  
 Ascend to be upon its summit crown'd  
 With emblems of an everlasting love.

*Harras.* And I, dear heart, do see within the pale  
 Of love's dear charm, fair pathways which soft lead  
 Through fruited groves whose trees do bend be-  
 neath

The weight of ever-changing sweets which love  
 Hath, mindful of our passage there, low hung

That we might pluck. And then, beyond, our  
course

Doth lie past shady bowers which do call  
To rest upon a couch made radiant by  
Sweet flowers of a thousand hues, whose breath  
Doth steal upon the senses in a soft,  
Divine perfume, and whispers—this is love.  
There will we sit and of fair love discourse,  
I, rapt, will listen to thy accents sweet,  
And in return, will make thy tale complete.  
While soft thine arms around my neck incline,  
I'll be a tree with sweetest flowers lin'd,  
To which thou 'lt cling to drink life-giving sap.

Thou, love, shall be the branches, I the vine,  
From vine to branch shall flow love's tender stream.  
Nay ! I would be a waving forest green,  
And my arms be like unto its spreading tops  
Which ever 'd wave around their loving screen,  
And 'neath whose boughs thou 'd sit as nature's  
queen.

As birds that play among sweet blossoming tips,  
And from one to other branch do constant flit,  
With kisses I will ravish first thine eyes and then  
thy lips.

*Ellen.* I'll be the wind that rustles through your  
tops,  
Upon them soft, like gentle rain I'll fall,

Which to their stems shall be as pleasant drink,  
 And soft along the branches running down  
 Will reach and lose itself within the trunk.  
 Around thy foot like velvet grass I'll grow,  
 There feel thy shade and add unto thy beauty  
 I'll be a bird that builds on thee its nest,  
 There live and fill thee with my melody,  
 Or be a lake whereon thou 'lt mirror'd lie,  
 I soft reflecting thee, thou seeing thyself in me.

*Harras.* O, no! sweet love, we thus would  
 sever'd be ;

We 'll be as birds, our lot cast in one tree.  
 In joined course we 'll wing love's pastures green,

From off its trees we 'll pluck ambrosial sweets ;  
We 'll tune our throats to wake the rosy morn,  
And through the eve, we 'll smooth day's passing  
way.

We 'll float our lives on one, long, liquid tune  
Drawn from the pulsings of a magic harp  
Whose strings are ever pluck'd by passion's hand,  
Whose melting tones for aye responsive spring.  
Our hearts shall be the strings, our love the tune,  
Our hearts each play one sweetest melody  
Whose rhythmic, vibrant measures loving join  
To form a never-ending harmony.  
O, love, your soft, sweet hand upon my cheek,

Sits like a queen upon a bronzed throne !  
O, let me paint upon that hand, sweet love,  
That hand 'fore whom the lilies shame to stand,  
One fairest picture of our kindred love !  
My lips, the brushes, guided by my heart,  
Each touch a kiss, each pause to breathe its name ;  
And when in glowing, ruddy colors mix'd,  
I 've painted there the likeness of my heart,  
I'll draw my soul and hang it on thy lips ;  
While in the labor fair, I'll catch thine own,  
And thus our lips, two pictures fair will bear,  
Mine hung on thine by thy love's silken web,

And thine on mine by my love's endless threads.

*Ellen.* O, sweet, my hand within your own,  
Doth seem to melt and blend itself with thine !  
Since, then, such background 's so unstable,  
Hang both upon my lips, where 's room for two,  
And paint them both with one, long, sweeping stroke  
Whose endless confines, ever circling round,  
May loving touch, yet never leave my lips ;  
Or if, sweet love, thou wouldst not have it so,  
Let shorter strokes make up the finish'd whole,  
And choose the colors of such subtle shade  
That all, distinct, shall seem to be as one,

That they shall run as drops that form a stream,  
And joining hands, in loving circles sweep  
Like separate gems to form a bewildering chain.

*Harras.* Sweet Ellen, love return'd begets new  
love.

Love, when return'd, doth take a deeper tinge ;  
Thus half my love 's the offspring of thine own,  
And thine in turn, is greater made by mine.  
Sweet love, thou art the canvas, I the frame.  
My love I'll never cease to paint to thee,  
And thou, when thou hast join'd to it thine own,  
Dost hang the picture up in me, its frame,  
To there behold what is both mine and thine.

*Ellen.* Ah, yes, but from my heart doth shine  
An image precious, that is only thine.  
In my love, sweet, you only see your own ;  
For all my love was born of thine.  
Look, love, how yonder sun, in western course,  
Doth stoop to meet the gentle falling rain,  
And as they meet, see how responsive springs,  
Upon the glorious pathway of his life,  
Yon soft, resplendent bow ! And so my love,  
When first thine own did shine upon my heart,  
Awoke to ever circle round your life.  
My love is the reflection of thine own,

Cast, loving, back in soft, divided tints  
Which yet so closely blend, thou canst not say  
That this, mayhap, is thine, or this is mine.  
Whence comes the perfume of this blushing rose ?  
Canst point the birthplace of its fragrance rare,  
Or say this is the rose, and this the sweet perfume ?  
And so our love can not divided be.  
Thou, love, shall be my rose, and I thy breath,  
My love that springs from thee, thy fragrance be ;  
Or I thy rose, and thou shalt be my dye,  
Thou seen in me, I beauteous made by thee.  
Look, love, how yonder lengthening shadows,

The heralds of black night, do ominous creep  
 To, jealous, draw thee from me ! Sweet, good-  
 night.

Come, night, I've still a light within my heart,  
 Whose endless day thy mantle cannot cover !

*Harras.* Dear heart, good-night. Thy kisses on  
 my lips,

This parting, tender clasp of thy sweet hand,  
 Thy boundless gift of love that floods my heart,  
 All these do make the journey of the night  
 More light than day. Thy parting kiss, at night,  
 Still lingers on my lips to ope my eyes  
 At morn ; thy darling hand still clasps mine own,  
 Its tender pressure raises me at day.  
 My sweet, good-night. Peace guard thy bed till  
 day. (*Exeunt.*

SCENE 4. *A forest.**Enter Robbers.*

*Robber Chieftain.* This is the way that he should  
pass. Within

These bushes we may crouch unseen, and as  
The bird doth fly, we'll catch it on the wing.  
We 'll do e'en as our lord hath bid ; but Ha !  
My lads, we now do care no more for him  
Than for this youth. He was a master like  
Unto ourselves, and under him we bore  
An easy yoke ; but yet there still is one

Whose hand is never felt. What say you, lads,  
To owning none but Self ?

I *Robber.*

We own but him.

*Robber Chieftain.* Ay ! lad, thou sayest right.

We are not yet

Such fools but that we know that which is for  
Our good. We 'll throw our fortunes in the scale  
That now doth swing our neighbors in the south  
And sweep from out our fair domain such name  
As lord and master. Now, from all, are you  
Agreed ?

*Robbers. (In chorus)* We are, we are agreed.

1 *Robber.*

Why dost

Thou doubt us, or dost think we have no heart  
For such rich spoils? Hast thou as yet ere shown  
A way whose path we dar'd not tread?

*Robber Chieftain.*

I did

Not doubt your heart, my lads, but fear'd that  
some

Might think that there was matter for offense  
In joining with our neighbors of the south.

1 *Robber.* No! no! not we.

*Robber Chieftain.*

Not I, thou shouldst have  
said.

I'll hear from all.

*Robbers. (In chorus)* We do take no offense.

*Robber Chieftain.* And do you all now swear your  
fealty to

My hand?

*Robbers. (In chorus)* Thou art our rightful head,  
and we

Do own no other.

*2 Robber.* Nay ! my comrades, much  
Too weak in swearing your allegiance. Let  
Us now a more respectful homage pay  
By making him our king ; he doth deserve  
It.

*Robbers. (In chorus)* Ay ! he doth ; we'll have  
him for our king.

2 *Robber.* Down on your knees, my lads.

(*They kneel.*

Brave chieftain,

thus,

We do salute thee king. Wilt have it so ?

*Robber Chieftain.* My lads, I catch the jest. I am  
your chief,

Call'd by what name ye will. And now, this eve

Good subjects, I you all invite unto

Our forest court, where we may undergo

A fitting coronation. There we will

Display to you the sparkling jewels of

Our crown, and give to each a share. These gems

Do lie within the vinous flagons we  
 This morn did overtake. Their lustre shall  
 A joyous levity impart unto  
 Our sylvan court—but Ha! enough of this;  
 Here comes our prey. To cover! lads, quick!  
     quick!  
 To cover!

*(They retreat.)*

*Enter Harras and Guard.*

*Harras.* Good, my friends, when pass we 'yond  
 This forest? It doth bear a gloomy and  
 Forbidding aspect, and I like it not.

How safely here, a hidden foe might lurk,  
 And swooping on us, unawares, might bear  
 Us off an easy prey. Dost deem it safe ?

*(Robbers surround them.*

I *Robber*. Didst speak to us ? We deem it safe  
 indeed

For those who dwell therein ; but as for thee,  
 We cannot so well answer.

*Harras.*

Bring me to

Thy chief. I have a letter for him which  
 Will sharp rebuke this outrage ; and if he  
 Doth not a speedy reparation make,  
 He 'll find he hath call'd down upon his head

A heavy foe whose arm will quickly stem  
His insolence.

*Robber Chieftain.* Sayest thou so? We have  
Prepar'd for him a lively welcome when  
He comes. Let him oppose our strength; he 'll  
find

Us no mean adversary. Now, unfold  
Thy message and I'll tell thee what 't is worth.  
What now! Unhand thy word. We are not used  
To brook delay. Unhand, I say, else we  
Will tear it from thee.

I *Robber.* Chieftain, is 't the word?  
Shall we make way with him?

*Robber Chieftain.*                      Hold ! Hold !   Deal not  
 So rough ; his time is not yet come.   I do  
 Intend this night shall be allotted to  
 The safe disposal of those gems whereof  
 I recent spoke.   This youth we will retain  
 To grace our banquet ; business must delay  
 Until the morn.

*Harras.*                      Art thou the chief ?

*Robber Chieftain.*                      These, thou  
 Dost see, I claim as mine, I am their chief,  
 And chieftain, too, of all this coast.

*Harras*                                              Dost thou

Not, then, allegiance owe unto this hand?

*(Gives him a letter.*

*Robber Chieftain.* This missive, here, doth indicate  
that I

Its bearer shall allow an easy path  
Across my lands. Wert thou so simple as  
To pin thy faith on this? I have receiv'd,  
Ere now, a second message sent by this  
Same Charles, which did suggest that I had best  
Direct thee on a journey which hath no  
Return. I tell thee, youth, thou hast been lur'd  
Into a trap, and were it not that thou

Art dangerous, I could have spared thee ; but  
 Thou standest in my way. I late have thrown  
 Aside allegiance to thy house, and do  
 Regard them as mine enemies.

*Harras.* O base  
 And cruel man ! wouldst snatch away the life  
 Of him who trusted thy protection ? O,—

*Robber Chieftain.* Away ! away with him !

(*They bind him.*

Hold ! Hold ! ye

are

Too savage. What, what Ho ! Bernardo !

*Bernardo.*

Ay !

*Robber Chieftain.* Bernardo, thou hast something  
gentle in  
Thy heart. Take thou this youth, and keep him  
safe  
While we do haste unto our coming revelry.

*(Exeunt.*

SCENE 5. *The same.*

*Enter Harras and Bernardo.*

*Harras.* Two moons have pass'd and yet my fate  
impends.

Each morn I say farewell to all I love,  
And then the mournful sound doth echo down  
The day until, at night, I say it o'er

Again. This 'pon my spirit 'gins to wear.  
Bernardo, dost thou bear remembrance of  
The time when we were boyish friends? Let us  
Renew that friendship for the time we may.  
I well remember thee, Bernardo. Thou  
Didst bear a frank and loyal heart, and I  
Believe thou hast it yet. 'T is true the heart  
That once was warm, may feel the chill of cold  
Indifference, if from their tender stalks  
The blooming flowers of love are sudden torn  
Away ; but still the seeds remain, and want  
But to be planted in fresh soil, when they

Anew will shoot unto a living growth,  
And change the unnatural winter of the heart  
To an eternal spring. I trusted thee,  
Bernardo. I do trust thee now, nor do  
I blame thee for this seeming change. I'm still  
Thy faithful friend. Wilt thou be mine again?  
Bernardo, hast thou ever felt thy time  
Was come, and long'd for some companion who  
A little might contrive to light the dark  
Descent? Perchance thou hast been near it. O,  
Bernardo, life is sweet to him who's bound  
To it by tender ties of love! O, how

The heart doth yearn, and, writhing, to them clings  
When it doth feel their slackening tendrils,  
One by one, draw off and silently recede  
Within a black, impenetrable gloom.  
Dost think me weak ? 'T is not the change I fear,  
That cometh quickly ; but my dread doth lie  
Within the woe that shrouds the long farewell.  
Bernardo, I have spoken right ! I see  
It in thy look. Thou 'st met some bitterness  
In life, that hath crushed out the light, and sent  
Thee on this reckless path to drown thy grief.  
This lot can not have been thy choice. Thou art

Too noble. In thy veins runs gentle blood.  
 Thou hast this fault ; thou art too hot withal.  
 Come, be once more my friend. How cam'st thou  
     here ?

*Bernardo.* Thou 'st read aright my woeful tale.

My friends,  
 My kindred, all are sudden from me flown.  
 For full six summers I have wander'd here ;  
 But let that pass. What matters it since I 've  
 Regained thee ? I was, I am, and ere  
 Will be thy friend. Thou thought'st me cold in  
     that  
 I did a chill indifference observe  
 Toward thy impending fate. This wore I as

A cloak to hide that which, if open, soon  
Had drawn toward us the glances of lynx-eyed  
Suspicion. Now, I will it lay aside,  
And show thee what my heart, these last two  
    moons,  
Hath purpos'd. List ! The question now doth  
    swing  
On how to get thee 'yond this ruthless chief.  
Thou shalt not go alone ; I 'll with thee leap  
To freedom. I a plan have laid by which  
We may betake ourselves beyond his, or  
His savage vassals' reach. This night, we will  
It put in execution. 'T is our last  
Sure chance. I well do know, in this delay,

He doth not study mercy, but doth swing  
His hand above thy head to let it fall  
At the uprising in the south. That time  
Approacheth. On this night these ruffians hold  
A customary revel, when, fear free  
In this retreat, they 'll quaff the vinous draught  
Both long and deep till it hath stol'n away  
Their vigilance, and hid their cautious eyes  
'Hind heavy lids. Then may we past them walk  
Unnotic'd, and ere rising morn hath wak'd  
Them from their slumber, we, from yonder coast  
Whose sullen roar now breaks upon our ears,

Will through this forest far advanced be  
Toward inner country. This, have I been slow  
Revolving up and down and round within  
My mind, that I might hit upon a sure  
And rapid course.

*Harras.*                      Bernardo, dost not think  
It dangerous? I could not ask thee this,  
If by its chance thou shouldst thy life, with mine,  
Imperil.

*Bernardo.*    Nay! 't will be an easy course,  
And 't is my choice. I know this wood as well  
As thou dost know the paths thou hast been used

To tread around thy narrow home. I know  
This chieftain's underlings, and where they, with  
Their bands, do prowl by day, and where they lurk  
At night. They turn their faces toward the north  
Where branching highways run. We'll drop along  
The south, and if some moving band, by chance,  
We meet, we 'll say we 're on a mission bound,  
And easy pass. They 'll know thee not ; for I  
Will clothe thee in a forest garb. I 'll on  
Thee bind this jerkin strong, with moving hood  
Attach'd, and round thy waist this belt will draw,  
With many keen-edg'd knives stuck round. I 'll  
o'er

Thy shoulders sling this long-bow tough, and at  
Thy side will hang this quiver well supplied  
With barbed arrows fleet and long. Thy feet,  
These buskins 'gainst the brambles will prepare.  
The moon, e'en now, her starry course doth 'gin  
To climb, and when she, towering overhead,  
Doth mark the still, mid hour, we must make haste,  
And through the thready wood betake our way.  
'T is at that time, when she doth laboring mount  
Her arduous course, she stops to rest awhile  
In heaven's centre, and thence, peering down  
With kindly glance, doth scan the inky wood

To see, perchance, if she may spy, and cheer  
The heart of some belated traveler.

If we do catch her face, she 'll glad us to  
The open. Thence, 't will be an easy pace  
Unto our journey's end. Wilt trust thy guide ?

*Harras.* Lead thou the way, I 'll quickly follow.

Ah !

Bernardo, when we reach at last the home  
That nestles in yon vale, we 'll celebrate  
This meeting. Thence, will I not lightly let  
Thee go again.

*Bernardo.* Ay ! friend, but now let 's don  
Our sylvan dress. The hour approacheth. Hark !

Dost hear the noisy mirth of yonder crowd ?

Do thou turn to the left while I do steal

A parting look to see if all goes well.

I 'll join thee 'neath the cover of yon pine. (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE 6. *A room in Edgar's house.*

*Enter Charles and Ellen.*

*Charles.* Fair Ellen, long 't has been since I 've  
been made

The object of glad welcome from thine eyes.

In truth, it seems that some dark spell doth o'er

Me hang, which spite of constant efforts to  
It cast aside, still to me clings as if  
Its earnest purpose were to bring upon  
My head thy fullest measure of reproach.  
This hanging cloud doth quick prevent my fond  
Desire to claim thy fair regard, as friend  
To friend. My heart doth bleed for thee when I  
Do see thee draw apart to silent weep,  
With none to whisper words of sympathy,  
And wipe away thy tears. O, then I long  
To clasp thy hand, to bow my head with thine,  
And with thee weep ! But then I am recall'd,

O, harsh reminder ! by the grating on  
My senses of my evil genius' voice—  
“ 'T is thou hast made her weep.” 'T is not my will  
But my misfortune that doth make my lips  
The bearers of new woes to break thy heart.  
There is none other to thee tidings bring,  
And though the tale be one of woe, it hath  
In it much more of mercy than wrought-up  
Suspense that, sickening, smothers up the soul,  
And grips the heart within a strangling grasp  
Till heart and soul in gasping anguish writhe,  
Borne down in torment. O, 't is better far,

To know the depth and breadth of sorrow's core,  
That we may rouse and arm our wills to brave  
Its woe, and strongly grappling with it, rise  
Above its power, triumphant in the fray.  
O, look not sad ! My lips are blister'd, and  
My tongue doth burn with shame that it must add  
Another burden to thy load of grief.

*Ellen.* What now ? What next dark shadow hast  
thou brought  
To add unto my heaping clouds of woe ?

( *Tears open a letter and reads.*

*Charles.* O, can thy tender strength stand 'neath  
the weight

Of this last blow ? O, steel thy heart, and freeze  
The fountains of thine eyes, lest that the sight  
Of thy great grief should burst my swelling heart !  
O, dire event that robs thee of thy staff  
Through life, and kills thy earnest hope in love !  
O, look not so, fair saint ! Thou art but weak ;  
But I thy strength will be. Come, lean on me—

*Ellen.* Away ! black villain. Dare to touch my  
hand !

Thy loathed touch doth thick with horrors teem ;  
The ground that bears thy form doth blush for  
shame.

O, that I, but for one brief moment's space,  
 Might stand a man ! I 'd grapple with thy throat  
 Till I had chok'd thy last, vile, cursed lie  
 Back to thy wicked heart, and dragg'd thy life  
 Down through its cursed mire, down, down to hell.  
 Away ! thou hind of Satan, with the proof.

*(Flings him the letter.*

*Charles.* What means this sudden torrent of  
 abuse ?

What dark suspicion hath ta'en hold upon  
 Thy mind, that, blackening, falls upon my head ?

*Ellen.* Read ! Read ! and though I know thou  
 need'st it not

To tell thee of the lie thy lips have spoke,

Thy crafty mind drawn up to help along  
Some black, insidious purpose sprung from out  
The tainted chambers of thy evil heart,  
Yet read ! that if there still remains within  
Thy mischief-working mind, one atom of  
Respect for man's opinion and God's law,  
Thou mayst slink away and hang thy head  
Beneath a never-lifting cloud of shame.

*Charles.* O, joy ! this letter, writ by his own  
hand,

Doth swift disperse our heavy clouds of grief,  
And through the rift appears a golden hue  
Which hails the coming o'er our wintry woe,

Of sunny, gladsome hours made bright by an  
 Enduring sun. Fair Ellen, thou dost do  
 Me wrong. I've been the victim of some grave  
 Mistake, and have been much to blame in that  
 I did too speedy credence give to dark report  
 Which swift doth fly from mouth to mouth,  
                     and in

Its course a constant coloring receives  
 Till it hath swell'd its first dimensions past  
 All bounds, and by these false additions hath  
 Been chang'd beyond all semblance to the truth.  
 How little may be pinn'd upon the frail,  
 Thin fabric of report, I well did know ;

But when my heart, wrought up by long suspense,  
Did, trembling, call upon my mind for strength,  
And found that it had ceas'd to hope, and when  
Upon the heels of these dire omens, swift,  
Came treading tidings that my fears did join,  
My grief o'erwhelm'd me, and my mind did slip  
Upon the brink of woe, and fell, bereft  
Of power to rise and seek within the gloom  
Due confirmation of their courier's voice.  
That he doth say he was detain'd by bands  
That owe to me allegiance, hinting at  
My instigation, wrongs me much, yet not

So much but that I can forgive ; for here,  
He adds, he doth believe it not, and doth  
Disdain to pin his faith upon the word  
Of one inur'd to acts of violence  
As 'gainst a brother's love. No doubt this is  
Some petty chief, who on the sight of such  
Rich booty passing close within his grasp,  
Could not restrain his itching palm, lur'd on  
By thoughts of richest bounty offer'd for  
His prize. O, well I know them, and upon  
This rascal I will swiftly visit just  
And heavy retribution. Fairest Ellen,

Dismiss that cloud that hangeth on thy brow,  
 And like dark night obscures beneath its wing  
 Thy radiant beauty. Let these strained bands  
 Of friendship, yet once more be mutual bound  
 To grace our coming joy, that we may not  
 Divided meet, but by a union fair,  
 Complete and doubly bless our new-found joy.

*Ellen.* Thou art too plausible, and think'st that  
 with

Thy oily tongue thou 'lt quickly heal a breach  
 Made wide by countless, mean attacks upon  
 A simple, artless heart. I trust thee not,  
 Nor will I trust my hand to one who takes

It but to scorn its clasp, and heap upon  
 It fresher insult. No ! time only o'er  
 The chasm can bridge, and if thou truly wish  
 It hold, build fast upon sincerity ;  
 But not till then, art thou a friend of mine. (*Exit.*

*Charles.* And must I now, when I had almost  
 caught

My fair one to my arms, be overborne  
 By fickle fortune ; to this sudden storm  
 Succumb, and soft give o'er my prize unto  
 Another's arms ? O, hated arms ! What dare  
 I not, to quick prevent such galling fate ?  
 To have him steal the kisses from her lips,

That first were mine, and she to whisper words  
 Of love to other ears than mine, to hang  
 Her arms around his cursed neck? No! No!  
 First, will I grind that neck beneath my heel.  
 What if he 'scaped my faithless squire's hands,  
 Shall I stand idly by and fold my own,  
 And see him leap to joys I covet? No!  
 It must be done! O, well I know the path  
 That he will take where he may soonest  
 Feast upon her charms. I did note down upon  
 The paper, he did beg that she would meet  
 Him at the arbor by the eastern gate.

I must dispatch, else she forestall me. Ha !  
I will take care he meet no arms of love.  
If once within these arms, he' ll never clasp  
Another, and, Ha ! Ha ! then I will bide  
My time to build the bridge which hath been call'd  
Sincerity, and o'er it safely walk  
Into the arms of my unwilling love.  
I 'll stand aloof as she hath bidden, and  
No counsel venture for his non-return ;  
I well have learned my lesson, not to be  
Precipitate. I 'll be the casual friend,  
I 'll oft be absent, study unconcern ;

Yet still be so attentive that, at length,  
My absence shall be felt, my presence needed.  
Yet still I 'll curb desire ; for I 've been told  
It doth take time to build that lasting bridge  
Known as sincerity, and not till hope  
Is long given o'er, and memory's page is dim,  
Will I conclude my bridge is built and strung  
Across the chasm my love mistakes for insult.  
Then, will I boldly o'er it walk and crave  
The boon which hath been promised, and which  
    makes  
My fair one say " Thou art a friend of mine."  
Ah ! then I 'll careful gather up the threads

I 've spun, and soon I 'll smoothly weave a web  
Which shall enclose us both in fast embrace,  
And then I 'll dare to whisper that its name  
Is love. Then will I patient watch until  
A new light springs within her eyes, and I  
Shall claim her for my own. My own ! My own !  
How sweet that name—my own ! Ah ! then I 'll  
know

What bliss there lies in lingering o'er the breast  
Of that sweet girl, by none but me possess'd,  
And drink of bliss when she to me imparts  
The precious secret of her female heart.  
O, to be lock'd within her close embrace,

To feel her warm breath glow upon my cheek,  
 To hear her gentle-whisper'd words of love,  
 Were heaven itself ! O, love ! sweet, sweetest love !  
 But Ha ! enough of dreams ; I must about  
 The great decider of my course, and then  
 'T will be full time to dream on dreams which have  
 A sure foundation. First I must procure  
 Some aid which shall insure a surer end  
 Unto this business, then, to the arbor. *(Exit.*

SCENE 7. *A rustic arbor.*

*Enter Charles and Maurice.*

*Charles.* Hast thou all things in readiness that  
 we

May quick remove our object to a safe  
 Concealment? Are the horses at the gate?

*Maurice.* Ay! all is ready at a moment's notice.

*Charles.* Hark!

Do thou keep guard against the inner gate;  
 But be not seen: I'll tarry here. (*They withdraw.*)

*Enter Harras.*

*Harras. (Sings)*

My love is like a summer rose  
 That fills my heart with fragrance,  
 And stills my soul to calm repose  
 Upon a sea of love.

Her eyes are like the sunlight,  
 And pour a thrilling radiance  
 That wafts my soul with sweet delight  
 Upon a sea of love.

Her voice is like the gentle rain,  
 My heart feeds on its gladness,  
 Its accents sweet, float me away  
 Upon a sea of love.

*(Charles stabs him.*

O, treacherous brother !

*Maurice.*

Away ! Away !

here comes another !

*(Exit.*

*(Charles tumbles, and falls on his dagger.*

*Enter Ellen.*

*Ellen.* O, bloody deed ! O, villain ! thou hast  
met thy just reward.

*Charles.* O, speak not so, thy words  
Do scorch my soul ! Be merciful, and say  
My shame may yet be washed away by thy  
Forgiveness. See ! I, for my guilty load,  
No soft extenuation seek to make,  
And yet—I knew not what I did. 'T was but  
My rising heart, tumultuous made by love,  
That overthrew the justice of my mind,  
And bursting forth, did laugh my will to scorn,

And bore me helpless swinging in its train.

*Ellen.* O, wretched man ! if my forgiveness could  
Remove thy guilt, thou hast it freely ; but  
I fear it little can suffice.

*Charles.* Fair saint,  
'T will ease my passing. O I die ! Farewell !  
Farewell ! (*Dies.*)

*Ellen.* O, hateful passion ! O,  
Tenderest love ! O, blackest crow, thus link'd  
With whitest dove ! O, love ! my love ! my love !  
Alas ! that this blossom, so lately sown,  
Might not a beauteous flower have blown !

It liv'd but to be blasted in the bud,  
Its tender leaves are dy'd in my heart's blood.  
My peace is gone ! My only love has flown !  
My heart will not cease its loss to bemoan !  
I lov'd to lay my head upon your breast,  
And thought 't was heaven when your hand my  
    hair caress'd :  
Your loving eyes look'd through my very soul ;  
Your footstep, on the path, thrill'd through my  
    heart ;  
And O, to think that all has flown !  
Thy truthful kiss of love, I 'll ever miss ;

Through the corridors of my heart will ring  
 No more, the impulse quicken'd by your tread ;  
 Within your arms no more, I 'll peaceful rest.  
 O, see ! the dagger that hath drunk his blood !  
 O, cruel dagger ! do one kindly deed ;  
 For thou canst still this reparation make,  
 Though having parted, thou canst join me to  
 My love. (*Stabs herself*)—He speaks !

*Harras.*

O, sweet, my Ellen,

come,

And with thy warming lips, coax back to life  
 My breath, that I once more may look into

Thy loving eyes, and feel thy tender arms  
 Around my neck, and from thy lips once more  
 Drink in the tender words of love. If thou  
 But giv'st me these, then shall I die in peace ;  
 For with them, it were peace to die. O, love !  
 Thy lips are cold ! What hast thou done ? O  
 sweet,

I die ! (*Dies.*

*Ellen.* O, stay ! but one brief moment, stay !  
 O, bitterest sweet ! why, do I bid thee stay ?  
 O, sweetest pang of death ! My love—I—come !  
(*Dies.*



















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